

AN EXAMINATION OF THE CONSERVATION STRATEGIES ON HISTORIC CITIES AND  
THEIR IMPACT ON THE DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS ;  
CASE STUDY COLOMBO FORT .

LIBRARY  
UNIVERSITY OF MORATUWA, SRI LANKA  
MORATUWA



University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka  
Electronic Theses & Dissertations  
www.lib.mrt.ac.lk

A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE,  
UNIVERSITY OF MORATUWA, SRI LANKA  
FOR THE M.Sc. (ARCHITECTURE) EXAMINATION

72"05"  
72(043)

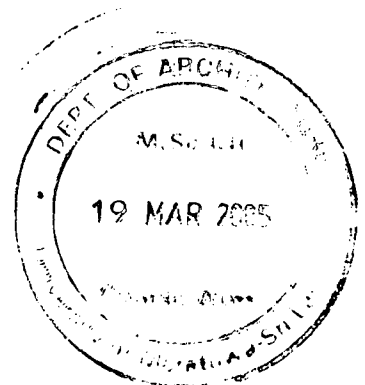
85505

A.W.N.S. WEERASEKARA.  
Faculty of Architecture  
University of Moratuwa  
March, 2005

85505



University of Moratuwa



85505

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this dissertation represents my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made, and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this university or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualification.

.....Weerasekara.....

(A.W.N.S. Weerasekara)



University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka.  
Electronic Theses & Dissertations  
[www.lib.mrt.ac.lk](http://www.lib.mrt.ac.lk)

The certification of the supervisor,

.....[Signature].....

Dr. Harsha Munasinghe.

Senior Lecturer,

Department of Architecture,

University of Moratuwa.

## **Acknowledgement.**

My tender gratitude for those who guided, advised encouraged, criticized, argued with and inspired me with in the period of making this dissertation and making it a reality

Arch<sup>t</sup>. Vidura Sri Nammuni, Head of the Department, Department of Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, for giving me letters and necessary documents for visit the case study areas and to take approval from the police to take photographs.

Dr. Upendra Rajapaksha, Senior Lecturer, Department of Architecture, and the coordinator M.Sc. dissertation, for the guidance and comments given on my faith throughout the study.

My heartfelt thanks to Dr, Harsha Munasingha, Senior Lecturer, Department of Architecture, tolerating and devoting most precious time continuously throughout the study with advising, arguing, criticizing, giving valuable comments and information as my supervisor who bared immense unbearable pressure and uplifting me to complete the study through out the dissertation who was a great source of strength and inspirations.

The Military License Officer, Ministry of Defense, Colombo and the Deputy Inspector General, Police Department, Colombo for giving me the opportunity to visit the case study areas and provide permission to take photographs with out any obstacles.

Mr. Rohan Perera, Mr. Bandara of the Excavation Division, Archeological Department, Colombo, for giving me Antiquity Acts, other information of Conservation guidelines and information of Colombo Fort from their collections of historical information.



University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka.  
Electronic Theses & Dissertations

Reading room staff, Faculty of Architecture, University of Moratuwa, Library staff, University of Moratuwa for providing me with the statistics required.

Ranga Malli, Vishoda Nangi and Lakmali Nangi for giving me the information and photographs of their collections.

My colleagues, who encouraged me in numerous ways.

Many thanks to Harsha, for being with me and encouraging, appreciating and coordinating my self in every struggle and success.

My dear *Appachchi*, *Ayya* and *Akki* to taking me in this position with many difficulties and pains; encouraging and blessing extended all the time, and to my late mother I dedicate this study with deepest gratitude and honor.

Last, but not least I thank many others, who wish to remain anonymous but without whose help and dedication in various ways, this study would not have been a success.

A.W.N.S. Weerasekara.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE CONSERVATION STRATEGIES ON HISTORIC CITIES AND  
THEIR IMPACT ON THE DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS; CASE STUDY COLOMBO FORT.

## CONTENTS

	<i>Page No.</i>
Declaration.	i
Acknowledgement.	ii
Contents.	iii
List of illustrations.	v
Abstract.	ix
 <b>Chapter One - Introduction</b>	
1.0 - Introduction	01
1.1 - Observation / Issue.	01
1.2 - Criticality.	03
1.3 - Intention of the Study.	04
1.4 – Aims and Objectives.	05
1.5 - Method of Study.	05
1.6 - Scope & Limitations.	06
 <b>Chapter Two – Emergence of Colombo as a Fortified City</b>	
2.0 - Emergence of Colombo as a Fortified city	08
2.1– The Colombo Fort	08
2.2- Historical Importance of the Colombo Fort.	09
2.2.1 - Colombo in Pre Colonial Period	09
2.2.2 - Colonial Period.	11
2.2.2.1 - Colombo in Portuguese period (1505 – 1656).	11
2.2.2.2 – Colombo in Dutch Period (1656 – 1796).	15
2.2.2.3 - Colombo in British period (1796 – 1948).	20
2.2.3 - Post Colonial Period.	24
2.3 - Topography	25
2.4 - Physical and Functional factors.	26
2.5 - Social and Cultural Factors.	26

### **Chapter Three – The Development Pattern of Colombo Fort.**

3.0 - The Development Pattern of Colombo Fort.	28
3.1- Open Economy.	30
3.2- Globalization.	31
3.3- Colombo as a Commercial Hub.	32
3.4- Contribution of the Streets to the Development of Colombo Fort.	34
3.4.1- Janadhipathi Mawatha.	35
3.4.2.- York Street.	41
3.4.3 – Chatham Street.	47

### **Chapter Four – Colombo Fort – A Declared Historic Urban Quarter.**

4.0 - Colombo Fort – A Declared Historic Urban Quarter.	56
4.1 – Conservation Issues to be Considered.	57
4.1.1 - Relevant Local Guide lines for Conservation	
on Historic Sites, Moratuwa, Sri Lanka.	58
4.1.1.1 - Guide Lines of the Archeological Department.	58
4.1.1.2 – Development Plan for the	
Municipal Council Area – 1999.	59
4.1.2 - Relevant International Guide Lines for Conservation	
on Historic Sites.	64
4.1.2.1 - The Athens Charter.	64
4.1.2.2 – The Venice Charter.	65
4.1.2.3 – The European Charter.	67
4.1.2.4 – The Burra Charter	70
4.1.2.5 - The Washington Charter.	75
4. 2 – Application of the Conservation Guidelines in Developing	
the Colombo Fort.	78

Conclusion	80
Bibliography	82



**List of Illustrations.**

Page No.

01 - New buildings try to dominate by showing the individual importance.	02
02 - Visual completeness of the area has been destroyed by the new buildings.	03
03 - Map of Sri Lanka and the location of the Colombo Fort.	08
04 - Map of Colombo Fort showing the boundaries.	08
05 - Map of Ancient Ceylon.	10
06 - View of the fortress in Colombo Fort.	12
07 - Portuguese map of Colombo.	12
08- Bell Tower of Kayman's Gate controlled the flow of traffic to the suburbs.	13
09- View of Galle face in 17 <sup>th</sup> century.	13
10- View if the Fort from Galle face Esplanade.	13
11 - Portuguese - Dutch Map of Colombo.	14
12 - Birds eye view of Dutch Colombo.	15
13 - Old Dutch Fort of Colombo.	16
14 - Ground Plan of City and Citadel of Colombo.	16
15 -The fortification boundaries of Dutch Fort in Colombo.	17
16 - An Old Dutch street of Colombo.	17
17 - Old Dutch Canal in Colombo Fort.	17
18 - Castle of Colombo from de beer.	18
19 - View of the Governors House in Colombo.	18
20 -The plan form of the Governors House.	18
21 - Elevations of the Governors House.	19
22 - An detailed Entrance door of a house in Fort.	19
23 -Dutch Arch as the most significant structural element.	19
24 - Map of Colombo in British period.	21
25 - View of Fort and Harbor of Colombo.	22
26 - Rail way constructed by the British.	22
27 - Remains of the Fortress.	22
28 - An Exterior Facade of a British Building with decorative elements.	23

29 – Plaster moldings, Ornate Columns and arches among the British details.	23
30 –View of Colombo Fort, showing the change of sky line and the usage of new materials.	24
31 - Hong Kong Shanghi Bank, with using of new technology.	24
32 – Boats in the <i>Kelani River</i> to transfer the goods.	25
33 – Projections of roofs to shade the ground floors of the buildings.	25
34 - View of Beira lake.	26
35 – Rows of Buildings formed congested bazaar area	26
36 - Development of the Colombo fort in Haphazard manner.	28
37 – The buildings are being tried to contrast with the old context.	29
38 – New buildings which were introduced to the context.	30
39 – Change of the built fabric with the Proportions, detailing and colors of new buildings.	30
40 - New materials introduced to the facades.	31
41 – Bank of Ceylon Tower, Twin Towers and Colombo Hilton as high rises which are the result of global economy.	32
42 - The new buildings disturbing the sense of enclosure and continuity.	33
43 – Street layout in Colombo Fort.	34
44 – Location of Janadhipathi Mawatha.	35
45 – Queens House in Janadhipathi Mawatha.	36
46 – View of General Post Office Building	36
47- View towards Janadhipathi Mawatha in British period.	36
48 – View towards Janadhipathi Mawatha at present.	36
49 – Street Elevation of Janadhipathi Mawatha.	37
50 – “Tunnel Effect” created by the facades of first segment.	38
51 – The Central Bank breaks the visual coherence.	38
52 - The Bank of Ceylon tower violates the continuity and weakens the unity of the façade.	38
53 - The National Mutual Building which has double arcades forming the continuity.	39
54 – The clock tower at the center of the street.	40
55 – Location of York Street.	41

56 – View of York Street from Echelon Square in British Period.	41
57 – View of York Street from Echelon Square at present.	41
58 – Enclosed feeling in the York Street.	42
59 - View of Cargill's building which is the most significant building in the York Street.	42
60 – Cargill's Millers Building and Slandered Chartered Bank making the continuation of the façade.	43
61 – Hemas building disturbing the sense of enclosure.	43
62 - Well defined edges in the Third segment of York Street.	44
63 - Grindlays bank building in the York Street has been treated in a different way.	45
64 - Port Authority building in the Northern end	46
65 – Street Elevations of York Street.	46
66 – Location of Chatham Street.	47
67 – Chatham Street in British Period.	48
68 – Chatham Street at present.	48
69 – Enclosed corridor effect in the strongly defined edges.	48
70 – Variation of the sky line doesn't disturb the sense of enclosure.	49
71 - National Mutual building supports the continuity.	50
72 – Intersection of Chatham Street with Janadhipathi Mawatha.	50
73 - Street Elevations of Upper Chatham Street.	51
74 – View of lower Chatham Street.	52
75 – Bank of Ceylon Building and chamber of commerce buildings in the northern side.	52
76 -.Height of the Central Telegraph building is not enough to provide sense of enclosure.	53
77 – The Trance Works House standing along with in the Façade	54
78–The height of Chamber of Commerce building disturbs the horizontal rhythm	54
79 – Vacant lands on the Chatham Street.	55
80 – Arial View of Colombo Fort.	56
81 - Old character is being destroyed by the new developments.	57
82 – Development Guideline plan – Colombo Fort.	60
83 – Zone A –The Urban Focus.	61



84 - Zone B – The Historic Core.	62
85 – National Mutual building, which needs the relocation of activities	63
86 - Hemas building, this needs the relocation of activities.	63
87 - Zone D – High Rise Core.	64
88 - Historical important buildings in the Colombo Fort.	66
89 - Usage of new materials with out responding to the facades violates the context.	69
90 - Muslim Mosque in the Chatham Street.	71
91 - Historic fabric in York Street.	72
92 - Street Facades are being destroyed with new construction in Chatham Street.	73
93 - Negligence of the old character while constructing new buildings.	74



### **A b s t r a c t.**

A city is aimed to be a unified entity as a whole. Equalization of different characters and arrives to a unique character. It of course will make a city visually and psychologically comfortable. The experience then will become a delight and meaningful. The key factor of the development of a city is the unique identity.



Historic cities have a unique character in their own, which has been appeared with the physical and social structure of the history. At present the conservation, preservation and maintenance of old characteristics have become indeed a crucial need of a historic city. As a result the urban environment has become destroyed and meaningless, which doesn't reflect the historical character due to many haphazard developments that have taken place. Historic cities are essential in order to determine a better future.

Therefore the historic cities are being formed a threat of destroying the historical importance. Colombo Fort is also a historic city, which is being destroyed its uniqueness. While the Fort is developing rapidly, the new built structures are varying with scales, proportions and language. The street facades are also ~~losing~~ the continuity, sense of enclosure and directional quality as well. Then the Colombo Fort is becoming non-legible with the other cities...